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# Interregionalism and the European Union

A Post-Revisionist Approach to Europe's  
Place in a Changing World

Edited by

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ASHGATE

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## Foreword

### Interregionalism in a Multiplex World

International relations scholars pay far more attention to interactions within regions and between regions and the global system than they do to interactions between regions themselves. This is partly due to a paucity of institutions that are interregional in nature. Just as the study of regions might be far less popular without the proliferation of regional institutions, the study of interregionalism has remained underdeveloped without the growth and visibility of institutions and interactions between regions.

But interest in interregionalism is growing now, both in the policy world and in academia. To be sure, the phenomenon of interregionalism is not really new. An early form of interregionalism could be found in the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung, whose 60th anniversary was held in Indonesia this year with some fanfare. But much of the recent theoretical and policy attention to interregionalism in recent years is largely because of the elaborate efforts of the European Union (EU) to project a global normative influence. Interregionalism is also evident elsewhere; apart from the revived Asia-Africa cooperation, there have emerged groupings such as the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), and the Forum for East Asia-Latin American Cooperation (FEALAC) that are clearly interregional.

Yet, the study of interregionalism has been constrained by conceptual challenges. Regions are themselves not always thought of as easily identifiable or autonomous actors to constitute meaningful basis for theory-building. The importance of the regional level of analysis, as a distinct from national or global levels, is not always recognized as necessary or important by international scholars. Regional concepts, and theoretical approaches to the study of regions, though growing, still lag behind concepts and theories that apply to domestic or the global level. For example, two of the most influential works on regions published in recent years, Buzan and Waever's *Regions and Powers*<sup>1</sup> and Peter Katzenstein's *A World of Regions*,<sup>2</sup> offer a rich array of concepts to analyze and compare how regions and regionalisms are constructed (from within and without) and how they relate to the global level as well as with the domestic politics of states, but say little about how different regions (or regional security complexes) interact with each other.

<sup>1</sup> Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

## Chapter 18

# Challenging the Political and Security Dimensions of the EU–LAC Relationship

Andrés Malamud and Pedro Seabra

### Introduction<sup>1</sup>

To speak of a relationship between the European Union on the one hand and Latin America and the Caribbean on the other (hereinafter EU–LAC) suggests a symmetry between the two partners that is difficult to substantiate. Actually, the EU is a treaty-based organization with legal personality and exclusive competences vested in common authorities, while the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC, as for its Spanish acronym) is an informal forum fully deprived of legal structure, headquarters, competences and budget. While the (now 28) European heads of state jointly integrate the European Council, a top EU decision-making body, their 33 Latin American counterparts participate in nothing even remotely similar. Therefore, the biennial EU–LAC summits that have taken place since 1999 – and all things related – may bring together two regions, but not two organizations. If this distinction is relevant in several issue areas, it is even more so in the security and defence realm, where organization is crucial for decision-making, monitoring and enforcement.

Further muddling cross-regional interactions, the very definition of security differs from one shore of the Atlantic to the other. While traditional, European *national security* conceives of the state as the foremost actor and threat, and focuses on inter-state relations, most Latin American countries prefer to call this *defence* and reserve the term *security* for police matters (Malamud and Schenoni, 2014). Such a gap hardly makes up for common theoretical ground, let alone policy coordination.

That said, security issues have been taken on board in relation to EU–LAC relations. An illustrative case can be found in the project for a Euro–Latin American Charter for Peace and Security, first proposed by the Euro–Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EUROLAT). Under the working assumption

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<sup>1</sup> A preliminary version of this chapter was presented at the GR:REEN Scientific Workshop, ‘The EU’s Foreign Policy and External Action in a World of Multiple Regionalisms’, held on 17–18 October 2014 at the Institut d’Etudes Européennes, Université Libre de Bruxelles. We are grateful to Frederik Ponjaert, Stelios Stavridis, Mario Telò and the other participants for comments.

that 'matters related to peace and international security should be a permanent item on the agenda of the structured political dialogue between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean', prevention, cooperation and collective action were then envisioned 'on the basis of the principle of the equal rights and right to self-determination of their peoples, and in accordance with the principles of social justice and international law, and by the shared commitment to peace, security, cooperation, human rights, democracy and multilateralism' (EUROLAT, 2009: 3). However, despite much fanfare, the submitted charter ended up unmentioned in the final declaration of the IV European-Latin American and Caribbean Summit in Madrid 2010 and was quietly relegated to oblivion. The state of affairs over this project mimics the real significance of security issues amidst European-LAC relations, where international 'hard' security matters are cast aside by low-key conceptualizations of security as well as by non-security issues.

In this chapter we trace the evolution and prospects of security cooperation between the EU and Latin America. Our focus is on discourse as much as on action, as we intend to highlight the gap between rhetoric and accomplishment beneath the ceremonial surface. The remaining is divided into three sections. The first one deals with the EU-LAC institutional relation with an emphasis on the European perspective; the second introduces Latin American security arrangements and concentrates on the Latin American perspective, especially from the point of view of the largest power – Brazil; and the third discusses potential areas of collaboration and conflict. An analytical summary closes the chapter.

### The EU-LAC Institutional Evolution: Where to Place Security?

Relations between the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean have been characterized by their low profile in the global scenario and by the development of a multi-layered approach that encompasses many mechanisms (Crawley, 2006). Yet both regions have an extensive track record of cooperation ties that pre-dates its current partnership format. Indeed, already by 1984, the EC (later the EU) was gradually putting in place an institutional framework with the aim of fostering political dialogue with the Central American countries through the San José Process. Relations with the rest of the continent were also incremented in the following years through the 1990 Rome Declaration, which served to institutionalize meetings with the newly formed Rio Group, while focusing mainly on democratization and conflict resolution. Throughout the 1990s, the EU started to pay attention to the ongoing regional integration processes and their potential for deepening cooperation initiatives. By designating the Common Market of the South (Mercosur) and the Andean Pact – later the Andean Community (CAN) – as main targets, the European authorities started to engineer a network of agreements. Among them were the Interregional Framework Cooperation Agreement with Mercosur in 1995 and a Joint Declaration with CAN in 1996.

**Table 18.1 EU-LAC Interregional Meetings 1999–2013**

Venue/Year	Agenda
Rio de Janeiro, 1999	Launch of the strategic partnership.
Madrid, 2002	Strengthening of democratic institutions; sustainable development; eradication of poverty; cultural diversity; justice and social inclusion; regional integration.
Guadalajara, 2004	Multilateralism; social cohesion; regional integration.
Vienna, 2006	Democracy; multilateralism; fight against terrorism; energy; growth and employment; migration.
Lima, 2008	Eradication of poverty, inequality and exclusion; sustainable development.
Madrid, 2010	Innovation; technology; sustainable development; social inclusion.
Santiago de Chile, 2013	Sustainable development; innovation; education; employment; renewable energies; trade; gender.

Aiming for a more ambitious result, the heads of state and government of Latin America and the Caribbean gathered with their EU counterparts in Rio de Janeiro in June 1999 to lay the foundations of a more structured interregional partnership. The general goal was to foster political, economic and cultural understanding, supported by the strengthening of democracy, the rule of law, international peace and political stability. Specific goals included the liberalization of the multilateral trade system and the creation of incentives for open regionalism. They continued to be pursued through subsequent summits in Madrid (2002 and 2010), Guadalajara (2004), Vienna (2006) and Lima (2008). In addition, they were complemented by an increasingly expanded agenda (Table 18.1) and negotiations over more concrete institutional mechanisms between the EU and as many LAC institutional actors as possible, including a Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement with the Andean Community in 2003,<sup>2</sup> an Economic Partnership Agreement with Caribbean countries (CARIFORUM) in 2008, an Association Agreement with Central America, and Free Trade Agreements with Colombia and Peru, all in 2010. On the other hand, the creation of such bodies as EUROLAT and the EU-LAC Foundation helped to provide a broader perspective of such interactions and to open it up to contributions from each country's parliamentarians and civil society.<sup>3</sup> The last variable in this

<sup>2</sup> Its continuing non-ratification, however, has dictated its overall inapplicability.

<sup>3</sup> In 2005, the European Commission tried to boost EU-LAC relations with new guidelines, while synthesizing its goals: increasing political dialogue, creating a climate favourable to trade and investment, and stimulating stability and prosperity in Latin America together with greater mutual understanding and more effective cooperation (European Commission, 2005). It was updated in 2009 (European Commission, 2009).

relation would be introduced in 2011, when LAC countries formalized the creation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (CELAC). As an alleged regional political entity in its own right, CELAC thus became the EU's natural counterpart in its pre-established partnership, with the 2013 summit in Santiago de Chile already reflecting this reality.

Obstacles abounded though. The impact of EU's enlargement, the debate over its ill-fated Constitution, the possibility of the Andean Community's disintegration (accentuated by Venezuela's exit) and the constraints of the Doha Round on multiparty free trade proposals proved difficult to overcome. Moreover, despite occasional coincidence in sensitive issues,<sup>4</sup> significant hurdles remained for a joint approach to the reform of international governance institutions. This induced 'notable shortcomings in the interpretation of the realities of both regions, which frequently led to inadequate labels – such as Latin American "populism" or European "neo-colonialism"' (Sanahuja 2008). The protracted free trade negotiations with Mercosur epitomize such interregional ups-and-downs.

The difficulties in reaching a multilateral consensus have led to the occasional focus on bilateral ties between the EU and individual countries in Latin America.<sup>5</sup> However, these exceptions did not compromise bloc-to-bloc negotiations until 2007, when the EU chose to engage more actively with Brazil. The argument was that, 'Brazil's demographic weight and economic development make it a natural leader in South America and a key player in Latin America' (European Commission, 2007: 2). Seeking to sidestep Mercosur's internal conundrums and ride on the wave of Brazil's rising image, a Strategic Partnership was established with the goal of increasing high-level political dialogue and helping to drive the dialogue with Latin America forward. The results failed to live up to generalized expectations and, as if seeking a balance, the EU conceded a similar 'special' status to Mexico less than a year later.

In the context of summitry proliferation and amidst a myriad of joint declarations and action plans, gauging the weight (or lack thereof) of specific issues in the official agenda proves difficult. Security matters stand out for their fuzzy conceptualization when compared with all the other topics. An intriguing, albeit non-consensual and non-committal, definition can be found in EUROLAT's own proposals, which understand security as a concept that 'embodies the defence of human life (and not

4 A commonly cited example is the III EU–LAC Summit in Guadalajara in 2004, as its final declaration repeatedly endorsed multilateralism and reproved torture in Iraqi prisons. However, the declaration fell short of condemning unilateralism (the word is never mentioned) and did not name the US as its object of criticism. This should provoke little surprise, as that same year four Latin American countries and 13 EU members had troops deployed in Iraq as part of the US-led 'coalition of the willing'.

5 In 1997, for example, the EU intensified its cooperation with Mexico under a general Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement, which foresaw regular high-level political dialogue and established a free trade area between the two parties. An association agreement following the same model was signed with Chile in 2002.

the mere survival of States), incorporating in a complex and integrated manner the principles for a harmonious and balanced co-existence, amongst which are human development, peace and the conservation of natural resources' (EUROLAT, 2011: 3). The basis for such a lack of a precise definition over what can be labelled as a security issue is twofold, reflecting both the supremacy of a single topic and the temptation to encapsulate other sub-securitized dimensions.

Drugs have been at the forefront of the EU's security concerns towards Latin America since the inception of interregional relations. This priority was evident already in 1990, when the EU granted special trade preferences to Andean and Central American countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) Drugs mechanism, which promoted the replacement of coca cultivation with other agricultural products.<sup>6</sup> This priority has remained unaltered due to the significant cocaine trafficking flows emanating from Latin America and into Europe. The latest EU–CELAC Action Plan for 2013–15 continues to highlight the 'world drug problem' and urges the strengthening of interregional dialogue and the effectiveness of joint efforts (Council of the European Union, 2013a: 9).<sup>7</sup>

At the centre of the transatlantic response, the EU–LAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs, created in 1998, stands out as a series of recurring high-level meetings that have set the tone for each cooperation project in recent years. The 2007 Port-of-Spain Declaration, in particular, enshrined the mutual understanding of shared responsibility, a balanced and evidence-based approach, and compliance with international law, including respect for human rights, as the three main pillars for any joint action (Council of the European Union, 2007). In turn, the most concrete result of this dialogue can be found in the Cooperation Program on drug policies between Latin America and the European Union (COPOLAD), officially established in 2011 and structured around four components, namely: (1) capacity-building to reduce both supply and (2) demand, (3) the consolidation of national drugs observatories and (4) the interregional dialogue mechanism.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the emphasis on drugs, other dimensions of (in)security have been included under the EU–LAC partnership's thematic fold. Citizen security, for instance, has recently garnered considerable attention.<sup>9</sup> Generally considered to be

6 Since 2005 onwards, GSP Drugs has been absorbed by GSP+.

7 A slight decrease in drug seizures over recent years has been observed. However, this reduction can be attributed to the existence of new entry routes via Western Africa (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011).

8 Other noteworthy initiatives include the programme on the prevention of the diversion of drug precursors in the Latin American and Caribbean region (PRELAC) and the programme for combating illegal drugs in the Andean Community (PRADICAN). For a complete listing of anti-drugs projects with LAC partners funded by the EU, see Gratius (2012).

9 Such concept is, in itself, an upgrade of previous notions of 'public security', as envisioned by the EU–CELAC's Final Declaration in Santiago de Chile, 2013 (Council of the European Union, 2013b).

incited by organized crime, gang activities and widespread violence; governance and rule of law deficiencies like corruption, lack of institutional resources and unfair taxation; and underlying economic and social factors such as poverty and social inequality, it reached its formal peak with the new EU Strategy on Citizen Security in Central America and the Caribbean, approved in July 2014 (Council of the European Union, 2014c). Food security has also risen to new levels of visibility, mainly due to the proceedings emanating from the Rio+20 Summit and promptly adopted by the nearby region as a priority (EUROLAT, 2014; Council of the European Union, 2013b: 5). Environmental security and the securitization of migration flows from LAC countries to Europe have also made their way onto the agenda, thus underscoring the wide net cast in terms of security issues over the years.

Hence, a conceptually fuzzy and substantially broad interpretation of security has taken root in EU–LAC relations. Yet, geographical uni-directionality is patent as security issues tend to be considered only when they: (1) originate in Latin America and the Caribbean and (2) affect European interests. In other words, as asymmetry prevails, spaces in-between are neglected.

### The Latin American Perspectives<sup>10</sup>

Historically, there have been two major institutional mechanisms to resolve interstate security disputes in Latin America, both of which include extra-regional countries. The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR), signed in Rio de Janeiro in 1947, commits signatories to mutual defence in the event of an outside attack. The Organization of American States (OAS), sponsoring institution of the TIAR, was created in 1948 to promote cooperation in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>11</sup> Although both the Rio Treaty and the OAS are still in effect, their relevance in high-stakes politics in the region is arguable. The refusal of the US to uphold the TIAR during the Malvinas/Falklands War, siding instead with its historic European ally, worked as an eye-opener for some Latin American elites. Henceforth, the membership of the US in the OAS, as well as the location of its headquarters in Washington DC, have left many Latin American administrations unconvinced of the neutrality of the organization. This scepticism intensified in the 2000s with the election of several centre-left governments across South America.

However, as previous mechanisms receded, others came to be. The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), for instance, was established in May 2008 and can be seen as the skeleton of an autonomous South American governance structure, with defence and security issues grouped under the supervision of

<sup>10</sup> This section draws partially on Malamud and Alcañiz (2014).

<sup>11</sup> The OAS is a successor of the Pan American Union (PAU), which originated in a series of International Conferences of American States at the turn of the twentieth century.

its interministerial South American Defence Council (SDC).<sup>12</sup> The Brazilian President Lula da Silva and his Minister of Defence, Nelson Jobim, launched the SDC proposal during a state visit to Argentina in February 2008, but it only gained traction after the Colombian attack on a FARC guerrilla camp in Ecuador the following March. Jobim then visited several South American countries to garner support and the SDC was eventually established in December 2008 (Weiffen et al., 2013). Although it is embedded into UNASUR's structure, its founding statute asserts that it is also subordinated to the principles and purposes established by the UN Charter and the OAS Charter: so much for nationalistic or nativist drifts. The main goals of the SDC are to consolidate South America as a zone of peace, to create a common identity on defence matters and to strengthen regional defence cooperation. Ideological rhetoric notwithstanding, the project does not envisage a common defence policy, even less a military alliance (Amorim, 2013).

On the other hand, both Mercosur and UNASUR include democratic clauses through which member governments may intervene if a Member State reverts to authoritarianism. Intervention mechanisms range from the suspension of membership to the imposition of economic sanctions. Procedurally, the two organizations allow for high-level consultations and direct presidential diplomacy among members. This became evident in 2012, when Paraguay's President Fernando Lugo was removed from office through a controversial impeachment. Mercosur and UNASUR served as forums within which the presidents debated on how to proceed. The final decision was to invoke the democratic clauses, which resulted in the temporary suspension of Paraguay from the two organizations.

Continued reliance on multilateral structures is not without motives. South American organizations are virtually costless, as host countries fund the corresponding headquarters, each Member State pays for its own travel expenses, and common budgets are non-existent (as in UNASUR) or negligible (as in Mercosur). Moreover, all are fully intergovernmental. They lack supranational procedures because national sovereignty remains the utmost principle and organizing rule. Regional integration thus remains shallow, and it would be more accurate to call it regional cooperation instead (Malamud and Gardini, 2012). Intergovernmental institutions offer a different set of incentives and resources for member states seeking to influence neighbours' policies, among which presidential diplomacy stands out (Malamud, 2005). Informal involvement and shuttle diplomacy have also been used within regional organizations or in bilateral and multilateral operations to diffuse occasional crises (Burges, 2010; Mares and Palmer, 2012).

Regional cleavages have always been at the core of continental interactions. Indeed, since the mid-1990s until the creation of CELAC, a practical divorce between South America and Central/North America was not only evident but was also promoted by political elites, especially from Brazil. But even with the

<sup>12</sup> The political roots of UNASUR can be traced back to the Cusco Declaration, signed during the 3rd South American Summit in December 2004.

new overarching forum, other points of fracture have risen recently. For instance, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Mexico established the Pacific Alliance in 2012 with the twofold goal of promoting free trade and building closer relations with Asia, mainly China. Just as the free-market orientation of the bloc sets it apart from Mercosur, its geographical orientation pulls it away from Europe. The increase of Brazil's material power and the emergence of anti-colonialist stances in the Bolivarian axis (i.e. Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela) have also fed an increasing aloofness from the West. The agreement between a Chinese tycoon and the Nicaraguan government to build an inter-oceanic canal in Central America ultimately erodes the EU influence over its one-time most important cooperation recipient in the Americas. Lastly, the recent US opening to Cuba further threatens to reduce the EU persuasion in the Caribbean.

Looking closely to thematic areas, it is visible how the actions of singular states overshadow or even overstep regional structures. Regarding arms control, for example, a few Latin American states have had a significant presence in the Nuclear Non-proliferation Regime (NPR) since its origin in the late 1950s. In fact, when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was created in 1957, Brazil and Argentina secured a coveted seat on its Board of Governors by striking a deal to alternate the position on an annual basis – even though the governorship was limited to one state per (developing) region (Alcañiz, 2000). In the 1960s, when the UN created the Committee on Disarmament in order to draft an international agreement to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons, Brazil was one of its 18 members. During the 1970s, Brazil made considerable advances in nuclear energy development, aided by a major commercial partnership with West Germany. Despite its high profile in non-proliferation affairs, the country maintained a strained relationship with the Western leaders of the NPR (the US and its European allies) due to its rejection of a double standard in the 1970 Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), whereby states with nuclear weapons remained armed and only the non-nuclear weapons states committed to disarmament.

Brazil's stance is particularly relevant. Because of its sheer weight, it contributes decisively to the setting of regional standards. In the last two decades, Brazil's successive administrations have pushed an agenda that has transformed Latin America's self-perception by splitting the region into competing organizations (Santander, 2014). UNASUR, in particular, has become an integral part of Brazil's strategy of using regional integration as a springboard for global influence. However, the Brazilian notion of the region has gradually changed from asset to burden in the last decade, as potential synergies lost steam and negative externalities increased (Malamud, 2011). Correspondingly, the mission assigned to the Brazilian military also evolved. As expressed in the National Defence Policy, the National Defence Strategy and the Defence White Book, the major current threat resides in the escalation of neighbours' domestic conflicts that could result in the intervention of external actors – that is, the US. Thus, by institutionalizing security relations, as promoted by the SDC, Brazil seeks to forestall ad hoc regional responses to crisis and avoid extra-regional interventions (Spektor, 2010).

This position is also reflected by the low priority attributed to the sectorial sub-mechanisms established with the EU, namely the Political Dialogue on Disarmament and Non-proliferation and the High-Level Dialogue on International Peace and Security. Even though supposedly focused on high-end international security issues, their irregular calendar of meetings is only matched by their respective negligible results (Vivet and Lalande, 2014). But even if Europe is snubbed as a region, some individual Member States are still considered worthy partners for technology transfers. Indeed, the extensive purchases of French and Swedish military hardware by Brazil in recent years, ranging from helicopters to nuclear submarines, prove that any pretensions rift is merely played out on the political and strategic domain rather than impacting or constraining economic transactions.

In a nutshell, the West – which, conflating the US and the EU, is thought of as the North from a Latin American vantage point – might be patted on the back in official speeches, but it is neither considered a priority partner nor is it particularly welcomed in the vicinity of the larger South American powers.

### Issues in-between, or the Atlantic Rift

European drug-fuelled concerns and Latin American unipolar spikes aside, a further continental split has recently developed, although it is one that, this time, distinguishes maritime areas, namely, the South Atlantic from the North Atlantic. In the words of Celso Amorim, the longest-serving Foreign Minister in Brazil's history and Defence Minister at the time of writing:

In recent years, there have been frequent attempts to 'subsume' the South Atlantic into a more general 'Atlantic issue'. But this is incorrect: the South Atlantic, from a political rather than strictly geographic perspective, is a distinct reality and we are interested in keeping it so. The South Atlantic is neatly different from the North Atlantic, arena of a military alliance that is characterized, among other factors, by the presence of nuclear weapons. We can respect other initiatives, and nothing prevents us from cooperating with other countries, but we should bear in mind the very clear notion that the South Atlantic – just like South America – constitutes a specific reality, different from others. (Even in Latin America, which we always use as a broader term, there are different geopolitical situations from those of South America, although we can and should cooperate also in that arena. We just cannot forget that our area of geopolitical interest is South America and our South Atlantic extension.) (Amorim, 2014: 7–8).

Such an outspoken position over a geographical area with clear ramifications for Europe reflects a willingness to both assume yet another leading role in reframing South American positions abroad and pre-emptively asserting its own set of strategic concerns in opposition to what is generally perceived as a grouping

of undesired external actors, European countries included. With two clean cuts, the Brazilian government thus severs both the Atlantic Ocean and the American continent into the South and the rest. Meanwhile, as these blueprints are growingly displayed, another transatlantic relation is slowly restored, only not with Europe and meant to keep it further away:

I highlight that Guinea Bissau is being treated by European countries as one of the poles of an 'axis of instability' that cut across the African continent up to Somalia. We do not want to see that independent, sovereign countries with their own interests, and furthermore so close from us as Guinea Bissau and other Western African countries, become an arena of rivalries or actions of other military alliances (Amorim, 2014: 9).

Embedded in this rationale is the idea that, as Brazil's ties with Africa expand, so does the conviction that extra-regional powers ought to stay away, thus making room for new approaches to deal with security issues. The increase of defence cooperation between Brazil and several African countries props up these ambitions (Seabra, 2014: 87). The deeply rooted perception of a strict correspondence between the EU's and NATO's agenda does the rest (Vaz, 2013: 4–5). A question follows: does the Atlantic Ocean bring together or cast aside the EU and Latin America? For example, in January 2013 the EU–CELAC summit in Santiago (Chile) issued a declaration with no explicit reference to the Falklands dispute. In contrast, the CELAC summit in Havana (Cuba) expressed a year later 'its strongest support for the legitimate rights of Argentina in the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas, South Georgia and Sandwich and surrounding maritime spaces, as well as a permanent interest that such a dispute is resolved peacefully and through negotiations, according to Resolution 31/49 from the UN General Assembly' (CELAC, 2014: 10). The final declaration also rejected the US 'blockade' on Cuba, somehow putting the US and the UK on an equal standing: as foreign trespassers, if not invaders. The irony is that nine CELAC members that supported the Argentine claim are subjects of the Crown, the Queen of England being their head of state. Whatever the case, diplomacy rules: when both regions get together, the issue is sidelined. It resurfaces only when LAC countries meet without their European counterparts.

A more sensitive issue amidst EU–LAC security relations comprises the revitalization of the South Atlantic Zone of Peace and Cooperation (known as ZOPACAS by its Portuguese acronym). This forum was created in 1986 through a UN General Assembly resolution on Brazil's initiative, with the aim of promoting cooperation and the maintenance of peace and security in the South Atlantic region. Emphasis was given to the prevention of nuclear proliferation and to the preclusion of extra-regional military presence. ZOPACAS brings together the three South American and 21 African countries with a South Atlantic shore. It has lately received renewed attention from both the Brazilian foreign and defense ministries, not only as the proper framework for dealing with security and stability issues in

the South Atlantic but also as a manifestation of support for South–South relations in global affairs.<sup>13</sup> The simultaneous presence of Foreign Minister António Patriota and Defence Minister Celso Amorim in the 6th ZOPACAS Ministerial Meeting, held in Montevideo in January 2013, expressed such a priority.

Regardless of these developments, the EU has hardly acknowledged the existence of ZOPACAS, not to speak of its utility. The recently devised European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS), for instance, recognizes the UN, NATO, the African Union and even ASEAN as potential partners towards achieving 'maritime multilateralism'. No mention is made to any Latin American solutions though, let alone ZOPACAS.<sup>14</sup> Its lack of institutionalization and operational incipency can be blamed for this official exclusion. The EUMSS list of maritime threats to Europe covers:

cross-border and organized crime, including maritime piracy and armed robbery at sea, trafficking of human beings and smuggling of migrants, organized criminal networks facilitating illegal migration, trafficking of arms and narcotics, smuggling of goods and contraband (Council of the European Union, 2014a: 7).

Yet, the one institution of the South Atlantic that could functionally be partnered with towards the resolution of such issues is simply ignored.

## Conclusion

The Atlantic Ocean still provides for old-fashioned security threats that are of common interest to the EU and LAC. But even though this area ranks highly in the concerns of both margins, it happens for different reasons. Given that one major cocaine route into Europe goes from Latin America via West Africa, the EU craves greater Latin America involvement in triangular cooperation with Africa so as to ensure better control of this transit route (Gratius, 2012: 21). In contrast, for Brazil the priority is to keep extra-regional powers out of the South Atlantic – which is sometimes dubbed 'a Brazilian lake' (Kahn, 2011: 495). In such a context, chances of further transatlantic cooperation are dim on all accounts, since both interests and perceptions are divergent and the gap is growing.

13 The evolution of the Ministerial Meeting's declarations is testimony to the extent of expanding the forum's reach. If by 1999 in Buenos Aires, the final declaration included a scarce 23 points, in Luanda that number expanded to 80 and afterwards, in Montevideo, to 124, including such items as calls for international non-proliferation, the reform of the UN Security Council or even references to the future of the Kyoto Protocol.

14 The subsequent Action Plan for the EUMSS goes one step further and adds the Union for the Mediterranean and the Gulf Cooperation Council into the mix, while continuing to ignore Latin American countries and institutions altogether (Council of the European Union, 2014b: 3).

The perception gap stems from the basics. As explained above, the very definition of security differs widely. In Europe, national security is handled with the military and there are no restrictions to its deployment, whether it takes place within or outside national borders. In Latin America, a tradition of military meddling in domestic affairs has led most countries to forbid armed forces from performing duties within state borders. As a consequence, security is defined as an internal affair and restricted to police matters, while external threats and interstate matters fall under the defence label and are bestowed on the military.

As to diverging interests, the increase of material power in some LAC countries (e.g. Brazil) and the emergence of revisionist, anti-Western stances in others (e.g. Venezuela, Bolivia and even Argentina) are propitious to an increasingly autonomous orientation, wary of any interactions that might affect sovereignty and the carving of an exclusively Southern space. Further security cooperation apart from counter-drug-trafficking operations is becoming harder to achieve. Moreover, NATO's expansion into the South Atlantic or any kind of meddling in the region by extra-regional powers is deemed unacceptable – and, again, regional governments make no distinction between NATO and Europe. The Latin American perspective can therefore be synthesized in a clear, if tacit, 'get out of my backyard' that leaves little room for EU–LAC cooperation on 'hard' defence matters.

On the other shore, the EU is caught between the NATO/US shadow on the one hand and its own institutional rigidity to handle the changing South Atlantic dynamics on the other. This leaves most of its proposals lacking. To be sure, long-established EU security cooperation will continue to be welcomed by smaller Central American and Caribbean countries as drug-related concerns will not disappear anytime soon. Also, the temptation to securitize (and thus obtain funding for) previously non-security-related issues will tend to increase. Yet, hard security matters are most unlikely to be approached on an interregional basis.

From a South American vantage point, security cooperation with the EU is increasingly considered neither virtuous nor necessary. Ironically, this does not prevent Latin American cooperation with European powers that compete with each other for business opportunities in the defence realm. South Americans have come to adopt a revised version of the Monroe Doctrine with the same aim as the original one: to keep the former colonial powers out, this time adding the US to the Europeans. Hence, EU–LAC cooperation will probably continue under the same conditions as today: top strategic matters will not be dealt with, and the EU will set the agenda on softer issues as long as it contributes the money. In this context, summitry and rhetoric can be expected to continue unhindered.

## Chapter 19

# EU–Africa Interregional Relations and the Role of South Africa

Lorenzo Fioramonti and John Kotsopoulos

### Introduction

South Africa is the prime partner of the European Union (EU) in Africa and is one of its most significant interlocutors among the so-called emerging markets. In theory, South Africa could be a firm counterpart for the EU in its interaction with Africa, especially insofar as interregional and multilateral relations are concerned. This is particularly relevant given that the EU's partnership with the African continent has achieved the highest level of sophistication: nowhere else in the world are two regions (or rather continents) as closely connected via a strategic partnership, a series of multilateral trade agreements and a deep institutional cooperation ranging from security to development aid and technological cooperation.

However, most scholars, highlight the ambiguities of South Africa's approach to interregional relations (Nathan, 2010), portraying the African nation as at once a multilateral and unilateral regional actor, pan-African and self-interested, a 'pivotal state' (Habib and Landsberg, 2003), a 'hegemon' (Habib, 2009; Schoeman, 2007), a sub-imperial force (Bond, 2004), a South–South leader or an emerging market suspiciously close to the global North (Kagwanja, 2006).

To a degree, this kaleidoscope of opinions is the consequence of a multifaceted and sometimes contradictory stance by South Africa on a wide range of issues concerning continental and regional development in Africa and new interregional dynamics between its continent (or the various sub-continental regional formations) and the EU.

On the one hand, South Africa stands as a champion of African regionalism and its right to develop autonomously ('African solutions for African problems'). On the other hand, it has taken advantage of its leading position within Africa to shape a privileged relationship with the EU while exploiting its influence in the rest of the continent to forge alliances with emerging powers all over the world. In many regards, South Africa has played the functional role of a bridge between North and South (Habib, 2009: 151), attempting the precarious act of balancing its responsibilities on the continent while expanding South–South relations further afield and maintaining long-standing and lucrative North–South ties.